



Illinois Department of Financial and
Professional Regulation
Division of Insurance

NEWS

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Slavery Era Policies Register Released

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR), Division of Insurance, today released the Slavery Era Policies Register as required by legislation.

The law requires any insurer licensed and doing business in Illinois to research and report to IDFPR information regarding policies issued to slaveholders for death or damage to their slaves. Information specifically required by the law includes the names of the slaves and the names of the slaveholders.

The register, available at www.idfpr.com, includes the following information: names, owner's names, county or town, occupations, and policy numbers. IDFPR received responses from approximately 99.6% of the nearly 1,700 insurers that were contacted for information relative to this law. The majority of insurers reported that they were not incorporated during the slavery era and therefore found nothing responsive to the law.

“While we cannot correct the atrocities of the slavery era, IDFPR hopes the release of the Slavery Era Policy Register assists descendants in tracing their ancestral roots”, said Acting Director Deirdre Manna, Division of Insurance.

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Historical documents were discovered. One example includes a book, which validates a meeting held at the Coffee-House on January 5, 1799. The entry indicated that the company was going to organize and sell shares. However, before the subscription lists were opened, the participants meeting solemnly voted, “That no insurance is to be made on behalf of this company upon any vessel, or property laden therein, for the purpose of carrying on the slave trade.” Any subscriber unwilling to abide by this condition was privileged to withdraw; no one did.

A similar law was passed in California in September 2000, with results published by that state in May 2002.

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